AVATAR

The Last Airbender

BOOK TWO: EARTH
CHAPTER TWO: "The Cave of Two Lovers"

Written by:

Joshua Hamilton

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ACT I

EXT. RIVERBANK - MORNING

Sokka and Momo are bathing in the river as Katara leads Aang in some advanced Waterbending lessons.

SOKKA
You guys are going to be done soon, right? We've got a lot of ground to cover if we want to make it to Omashu today.

KATARA
What, like you're ready to go right now, naked guy?

SOKKA
I can be ready in two minutes. Seriously, whenever.

He leans back and floats on the water, as Katara continues the lesson.

AANG
So, you were showing me the octopus form.

KATARA
Right. Let me see your stance.

Aang takes a stance with his arms out. Katara walks up behind Aang.

KATARA (cont'd)
Your arms are too far apart.

Katara puts her arms around Aang to adjust his arms. Her face is right next to Aang's. He gazes at her.

KATARA (cont'd)
See, if you move them closer together you protect your center. You got it?

She looks at Aang who snaps out of his love trance.

AANG
Oh, yeah... thanks.

KATARA
Okay, let's see what you got.

They face off to spar. Katara attacks with a flurry of Waterbending moves -- Aang redirects and/or blocks each of the eight attacks.

KATARA (cont'd)
You make a fine octopus, pupil Aang.

Just then, Momo's ears perk up. There is a SOUND in the distance -- the kids hear it too.

AANG
Who's playing music?

A small group of people emerge from the woods, playing instruments and singing -- these are the nomads. CHONG, a forty something guy with long scruffy hair and a goatee, sings. There is also a pretty woman named LILY and a goofy guy named MOKU. Maybe a few other nomads.

CHONG
...don't fall in love with a travelin' girl/ they'll leave you broke and broken hearted...

The nomads abruptly stop playing when they see the kids.

CHONG (cont'd)
Hey, river people!

KATARA
We're not river people.

CHONG
You're not? Well then what kind of people are you?

AANG
Just people.

CHONG
Aren't we all, brother!

Sokka hurries out of the water, not realizing that he is in his underwear.

SOKKA
Who are <u>you</u>?

CHONG
I'm Chong and this is my wife, Lily. We're nomads, happy to go wherever the wind takes us.

AANG
You guys are nomads? That’s great, I’m a nomad!

CHONG
Hey, me too!

AANG
I know, you just said that.

CHONG
Oh...
(to Sokka, very earnest)
Nice underwear.

Sokka looks down and realizes he’s in his underwear. He quickly grabs Momo to cover himself and exits to the woods.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Uncle stands staring at a strange plant -- completely transfixed, Zuko returns to camp.

ZUKO
I didn’t find anything to eat. I can’t live like this -- I wasn’t meant to be a fugitive. This is impossible!
(noticing)
Uncle, what are you doing?

We see Uncle has not broken his stare. Zuko looks at the plant that Uncle is inspecting.

UNCLE
You are looking at the rare, white dragon bush. Its leaves make a tea so delicious it’s heartbreaking...
(beat)
That, or it’s the white jade bush, which is poisonous.

ZUKO
We need food, not tea. I’m going fishing.

Zuko walks off leaving Uncle staring at the plant, contemplating.

UNCLE
Hmm... delectable tea? Or deadly poison?

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Aang is sitting with the nomads who are strumming their instruments -- Momo paws at their hands as they play. Lily braids flowers into Katara's hair while other nomads braid flowers into Appa's fur. Sokka returns fully clothed.

AANG
Hey Sokka, you should hear some of these stories! These guys have been everywhere.

CHONG
Well, not everywhere, little arrowhead. But where we haven't been, we've heard about through stories and songs.

AANG
They said they'll take us to see a giant nightcrawler.

MOKU
(to Aang)
On the way, there's a waterfall that creates a never-ending rainbow.

SOKKA
Look, I hate to be the wet blanket here, but since Katara is busy, I guess it's up to me. We need to get to Omashu. No sidetracks. No worms, and definitely no rainbows.

CHONG
Whoa! Sounds like someone's got a case of destination fever. You're worried too much about where you're going.

LILY
You got to focus less on the "where" and more on the "going."

SOKKA
(unmoved)
O-MA-SHU.

Finally Katara chimes in.

KATARA
Sokka’s right. We need to find King Bumi so Aang can learn Earthbending somewhere safe.

CHONG
Sounds like you’re headed to Omashu.

Sokka slaps his forehead.

CHONG (cont’d)
There’s an old story about a secret pass -- right through the mountains!

KATARA
Is this real or a legend?

CHONG
It’s a real legend. And it’s as old as Earthbending itself.

The nomads begin playing their instruments and singing.

CHONG (cont’d)
Two lovers forbidden from one another/ a war divides their people and a mountain divides them apart/ built a path to be together/
(interrupts song)
I forget the next couple lines, but then it goes:
(singing again)
Secret tunnel, secret tunnel/ through the mountains/ secret secret secret secret tunnel/

The nomads finish their song.

SOKKA
I think we’ll just stick with flying. We’ve dealt with the Fire Nation before -- we’ll be fine.

Aang is petting Appa.

AANG
Yeah, thanks for the help but Appa hates going underground.
(MORE)

AANG(cont'd)
And we need to do whatever makes Appa most comfortable.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

A FIRE NATION CAPTAIN stands in front of a line of catapults.

FIRE NATION CAPTAIN
Launch!

SOLDIERS fire the catapults, shooting fireballs into the sky.

EXT. SKY ON APPA - DAY

Appa bellows angrily as he dodges hundreds of fireballs from the Fire Nation attack below. The kids are SCREAMING.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERBANK - MOMENTS LATER

The kids look haggard from the Fire Nation attack as they talk to the nomads.

SOKKA
(defeated)
Secret love cave, let’s go.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Zuko is returning with a comically tiny fish. He sees Uncle scratching his face and arms, covered in a rash.

UNCLE
Zuko, remember that plant I thought might be tea?

ZUKO
You didn’t.

UNCLE
I did, and it wasn’t. When the rash spreads to my throat, I will stop breathing. But look what I found!

Uncle holds up a branch with red berries on it.

UNCLE (cont’d)
These are the Pakui berries, known to cure the poison of the white jade plant!
(MORE)

UNCLE(cont'd)
(beat)
That, or Maka'ole berries that cause blindness.

Zuko grabs the berries and throws them on the ground.

ZUKO
We're not taking anymore chances with these plants. We need to get help.

UNCLE
But where are we going to go? We're enemies of the Earth Kingdom, and fugitives from the Fire Nation.

ZUKO
If the Earth Kingdom discovers us, they'll have us killed.

UNCLE
But if the Fire Nation discovers us, we'll be turned over to Azula.

They both nod in agreement.

ZUKO
Earth Kingdom it is.

EXT. RUINS - DAY

The group is walking past ancient ruins, heading to the cave.

SOKKA
How far are we from the tunnel?

CHONG
Actually, it's not just one tunnel. The lovers didn't want anyone to find out about their love so they built a whole labyrinth.

Sokka stops short.

SOKKA
Labyrinth?

CHONG
I'm sure we'll figure it out.

He starts moving again and everyone else does too.

LILY
All you need to do is trust in love -- according to the curse.

Sokka stops short again.

SOKKA
(annoyed)
Curse?!

CHONG
(announcing)
We're here!

We reveal that the kids have arrived at...

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The mouth of the cave is a large, uninviting hole in the side of the mountain. The group stops before entering.

SOKKA
What exactly is this curse?

CHONG
The curse says only those that trust in love can make it through the caves. Otherwise, you will be trapped in them forever.

LILY
And die.

CHONG
Oh yeah, and die.
(realizing)
Hey, I just remembered the rest of that song.
(singing)
And die.

SOKKA
That's it, there's no way we're going through some cursed hole.

MOKU
Hey, someone's making a big campfire.

Moku is pointing to smoke in the distance. Everyone looks.

KATARA
That's no campfire, Moku.

SOKKA
It’s Fire Nation. They’re tracking us.

Aang looks to Chong.

AANG
So, all you need is to trust in love to get through these caves?

CHONG
That is correct, Master Arrowhead.

Aang looks at Katara -- then back at Chong.

AANG
We can make it.

Sokka looks at the rising smoke and then at Chong.

SOKKA
Everyone into the hole.

Sokka leads the group into the cave. Appa hesitates.

APPA
(NERVOUS BELLOW)

Appa follows them in.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

The Fire Nation Captain arrives, followed by his soldiers who see footprints going into the cave. The soldiers start to follow them in, but their captain stops them.

FIRE NATION CAPTAIN
Hold on! It’s too dangerous. Haven’t you heard the song?
(beat)
Just close them in. The mountain will take care of the rest.

The soldiers Firebend above the cave, causing rocks to fall and block the entrance.

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The group is hiding in one of the tunnels, listening as the cave rumbles. They can see shadows of the rocks beginning to block the entrance, reflecting off a wall - it gets dark. The nomads light some torches.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

The group is looking at the pile of rocks blocking the entrance. Appa is especially nervous and paws at the rocks.

APPA
(WHIMPERING)

KATARA
It’s okay, Appa. We’ll be fine... I hope.

SOKKA
We will be fine. All we need is a plan. Chong, how long do those torches last?

CHONG
About two hours each.

LILY
And we have five torches so that’s ten hours!

Reveal all five torches lit.

SOKKA
It doesn’t work like that if they’re all lit at the same time.

LILY
Oh, right.

They put out three of the torches. Sokka unrolls a large piece of paper, and brings out the self-contained ink brush that he got from the mechanist in 1.17.

SOKKA
I’m going to make a map to keep track of exactly where we’ve been. Then we should be able to solve it like a maze and get through.

Sokka marks on a sheet of paper and leads the group into the dark maze.

EXT. EARTH KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

Uncle and Zuko walk through the town, wearing drab clothes, trying to disguise themselves. Uncle is still scratching at his rash. They talk in hushed tones.

Some Earth Kingdom SOLDIERS on ostrich-horses pass them. The soldiers look at Uncle and Zuko for a beat longer than usual.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A nurse, SONG, is treating Uncle's rash. Zuko sits nearby.

SONG
You two must not be from around here. We know better than to touch the white jade -- much less make it into tea and drink it.

UNCLE
(LAUGHING) Oops.

SONG
So, where are you traveling from?

ZUKO
(covering poorly)
Yes, we're travelers.

SONG
Do you have names?

ZUKO
(flustered)
Names? Of course we have names... I'm... Lee, and this is my Uncle... uhm... Mushi.

Uncle gives Zuko an angry look. Zuko shrugs back.

UNCLE
Yes, my nephew was named after his father so we just call him Junior.

Now, Zuko gives Uncle a look. Uncle smiles. The nurse finishes treating Uncle.

SONG
Mushi and Junior, huh? My name is Song. You two look like you could use a good meal. Why don't you stay for dinner?

ZUKO
Sorry, but we need to be moving on.

SONG
That's too bad. My mom always makes too much roast duck--

UNCLE
(quickly)
Where do you live, exactly?

INT. CAVE - DEAD END - LATER

Sokka is confused as he looks at his map and leads the group.

KATARA
Sokka, this is the tenth dead end you've lead us to.

SOKKA
This doesn't make any sense, we already came through this way.

Sokka, frustrated, turns the map upside down, then side ways.

CHONG
We don't need a map, we just need love. The little guy knows it.

AANG
Yeah, but I wouldn't mind a map also.

Sokka flips the map over and looks at it again, comparing the map to the surrounding tunnels.

SOKKA
There's something strange here... There's only one explanation.

Everyone is looking at Sokka.

SOKKA (cont'd)
The tunnels are changing.

In the distance, there is another RUMBLING sound. Momo jumps on Aang's head, scared.

INT. NURSE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Zuko and Uncle are seated on the floor at a table with Song's MOM. Song finishes serving the food then sits down. Uncle is eating.

MOM
My daughter tells me you're refugees. We were once refugees ourselves.

ZUKO
Really?

SONG
Yes. When I was a little girl, the Fire Nation raided our farming village. All the men were taken away. That was the last time I saw my father.

Zuko involuntarily winces, and looks away -- this has hit home. Song notices.

ZUKO
I haven't seen my father in many years.

SONG
Oh. Is he fighting in the war?

Uncle looks up from his food. Zuko nods knowingly.

ZUKO
Yeah.

Song's mom walks over and puts a comforting hand on Zuko.

Zuko is visibly upset.

INT. CAVE - ANOTHER AREA - AFTERNOON

The group is lost and scared. Sokka is trying to keep them together. Appa is especially frightened.

CHONG
The tunnels, they're a'changin'! It must be the curse! I knew we shouldn't have come down here.

SOKKA
Right, if only we listened to you.

Just then, there is a HOWL in the distance.

KATARA
Everyone be quiet. Listen.

There is dead silence for a beat. Then, without warning, a loud, shrieking HOWL startles everyone as a WOLFBAT flies into the tunnel baring its fangs and heading straight for Momo. At the last second, before it can seize Momo in its claws, Katara snatches Momo into her arms to protect him.

CHONG
It’s a giant flying thing with teeth!

MOKU
No, it’s a wolfbat!

As the wolfbat faces off to her, Sokka tries to fend it off with a torch, but it growls and flaps and the confrontation continues. Aang sends an air blast at the wolfbat, knocking it into the wall and sending it whimpering and fleeing out of the tunnel -- but the airblast also knocks Sokka’s torch out of his hands and onto Appa’s fur.

Appa reacts by flailing and bucking, knocking the walls of the cave. Katara quickly Waterbends at Appa, putting out the fire, but it’s too late. Rocks fall from the cave ceiling...

Aang does an awesome Airbending move, knocking Sokka and the nomads out of the way. He then grabs Katara and does another Airbending move just before the ceiling crashes in. A large plume of smoke fills the air. When the dust settles, we see Aang and Katara lying next to each other. Aang’s arm is around her.

Appa bellows; Katara and Aang stand up. They are surprised when they see that the cave-in has created a wall separating the tunnel -- Sokka, Momo, and the nomads are on the other side.

INT. CAVE - OTHER SIDE OF WALL - CONTINUOUS

The nomads are recovering from the cave-in. Sokka is desperately trying to dig through the wall when Chong comes up behind him.

CHONG
It’s no use, we’re separated. But at least you have us.

SOKKA
Nooo!!

Sokka begins digging even more fervently. Suddenly he pulls something loose, and more rocks and dust start to fall -- he stops digging.

EXT. NURSE’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zuko steps out to get a breath of fresh air. He sits down, pensive. There is a beat then...

SONG (O.S.)
Can I join you?

Zuko doesn’t say anything. Song sits next to him.

SONG (cont’d)
I know what you’ve been through. We’ve all been through it. The Fire Nation has hurt you.

Song looks Zuko in the eyes, then reaches up to touch his scar -- but he stops her hand just short. She withdraws her hand.

SONG (cont’d)
It’s okay. They’ve hurt me too.

She reveals a scar on her leg similar to Zuko’s. Zuko stares at it in disbelief.

INT. CAVE - INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The nomads sing as they pass a part of the cave where a few tunnels intersect.

CHONG
Don’t let the cave-in get you down/ don't let the falling rocks turn your smile into a frown/ when the tunnel’s at its darkest that’s when you need a clown/ don’t let the cave-in get you down.

The nomads end their song.

INT. CAVE - STONE DOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

Katara, Appa and Aang are walking down a dark tunnel. Just then, Katara excitedly points to something ahead.

KATARA
Aang, look!

The kids run up to a LARGE STONE DOOR.

AANG
We found the exit!

They begin pushing on the door.

INT. CAVE - STONE DOOR - NIGHT

Katara and Aang push the door but it won’t budge. They stop.

APPA
(BELLOWS)

Aang and Katara jump on his back. Appa rams the stone door with his head. His paws dig into the ground slowly pressing forward using all his strength. The stone door slowly begins to slide back and Appa and the kids enter...

INT. TOMB OF TWO LOVERS - CONTINUOUS

The excitement on Aang and Katara's face quickly fades as they hop down from Appa.

KATARA
This isn't the exit.

Aang walks up to a sarcophagus in the middle of the room.

AANG
No... it's a tomb.

APPA
(BELLOWS, "Nooooo!")

END OF ACT II

ACT III

INT. TOMB OF TWO LOVERS - NIGHT

Two sarcophagi lay side by side in the middle of the tomb. Aang walks up to them.

AANG
It must be the two lovers from the legend. That's who's buried here.

Katara runs the dying torch close to the wall. It lights up, revealing PICTOGRAMS, which are a combination of pictures and Chinese characters. The first pictures are of a man and a woman.

KATARA
These pictures tell their story.

As Katara starts deciphering the meaning of the pictograms, we begin a stylized telling of the story of the two lovers in which we start with a static pictogram on the wall and watch it come alive through the magic of animation.

We start with a pictogram of two villages on either side of a mountain.

KATARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
They met on top of the mountain that divided their two villages.

From one village we see a man come up the mountain with his flocks. On the other side a woman comes up the mountain, picking flowers. They meet at the top and kiss.

KATARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
The villages were enemies, and they could not be together.

We go to another picture of the mountain with the two villages fighting on top. As this picture comes to life, the fighting ends, and the villagers go back to their homes. We see the man and woman in their individual villages, looking wistfully at the top of the mountain.

KATARA (cont'd)
But their love was strong, and they found a way.

We go to the next picture, one of the man next to a large, furry creature (a badgermole).

KATARA (cont'd)
The two lovers learned Earthbending from the badgermoles -- they became the first Earthbenders.

The man and the badgermole start tunnelling into the mountain. We go to another picture, which features the woman with a badgermole. She also tunnels through the mountain. The man and woman meet in the middle.

KATARA (cont'd)
They built elaborate tunnels so they could meet secretly. Anyone who tried to follow them would be lost forever in the labyrinth.

We see a pictogram of the woman waiting alone in the middle of the mountain.

KATARA (cont'd)
But one day the man didn't come. He died in the war between their two villages.

We see a pictogram of the woman unleashing awesome Earthbending fury.

KATARA (cont'd)
Devastated, the woman unleashed a terrible display of her Earthbending power.

We see a pictogram of both villages, afraid of her.

KATARA (cont'd)
She could have destroyed them all. But instead, she declared the war over. Both villages helped her build a new city where they would live together in peace.

The final picture is of the city of Omashu.

KATARA (cont'd)
The woman's name was Oma and the man's name was Shu. The great city was named Omashu, as a monument to their love.

We come out of our stylized pictogram section. Aang looks moved by the romantic story.

Katara walks up to a sarcophagus, it has a picture of Oma and Shu kissing, with Chinese characters inlaid above the picture. Katara reads these words.

KATARA (cont'd)
Love is brightest in the dark.

Katara looks at the torch which is about to go out.

INT. CAVE - ANOTHER DEAD END - NIGHT

Sokka is frustrated as he looks at a map.

MOKU
Ah great, your plans have lead us to another dead end.

SOKKA
At least I'm thinking of ideas and trying to get us out of here -- Moku.

CHONG
Wait a minute. We're thinking of ideas? I've had an idea for like an hour now.

SOKKA
(FRUSTRATED GRUNT) Yes, we're all thinking of ideas!

CHONG
Well, then listen to this: if love is the key out of here, then all we need to do is play a love song.

Sokka slaps his forehead in frustration.

INT. TOMB OF TWO LOVERS - NIGHT

The torch flickers and Appa bellows.

AANG
How are we going to find our way out of these tunnels?

Katara scrutinizes the pictogram of the two lovers kissing.

KATARA
I have a crazy idea.

AANG
What?

KATARA
Never mind, it’s too crazy.

AANG
Katara, what is it?

KATARA
I was thinking... the curse says we’ll be trapped in here forever unless we trust in love.

AANG
Right...

KATARA
(indicates kissy picture)
And here, it says “love is brightest in the dark,” and has a picture of them kissing.

AANG
Where are you going with this?

KATARA
(unsure)
Well... what if we kissed?

Aang is stunned.

AANG
... us kissing?

KATARA
See, it was a crazy idea.

AANG
(still stunned)
Us. Kissing.

KATARA
Us kissing! What was I thinking? Can you imagine that?!

AANG
(covering)
Yeah, ha ha. I definitely wouldn’t want to kiss you.

Katara gives Aang an offended look.

KATARA
Oh, well I didn’t realize it was such a horrible option. Sorry I suggested it.

AANG
(backpedaling)
No, no, I mean -- if it was a choice between kissing you and dying...

KATARA
(OFFENDED GASP)

Katara gets an even more offended look.

AANG
What?! I’m saying I would rather kiss you than die -- that’s a compliment!

KATARA
Well I’m not sure which I would rather do!

Katara grabs the torch from Aang and storms out of the tomb.

AANG
(sotto to himself)
What is wrong with me?

Aang sadly follows.

INT. CAVE - ANOTHER AREA - NIGHT

The nomads continue their love song. Sokka still has his head in his hands.

CHONG
(singing)
...even if you’re lost/ You can’t lose the love/ Because it’s in your heart...

EXT. NURSE’S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Song and her mother say goodbye to Zuko and Uncle as they leave.

UNCLE
(to Mom)
Thank you for the duck, it was excellent.

MOM
You’re welcome. It brings me joy to see someone eat my cooking with such... gusto.

Uncle pats his belly.

UNCLE
Much practice.

Song’s mom nods to Uncle. Zuko turns around and walks away without saying a word. Uncle stops Zuko.

UNCLE (cont’d)
Junior, where are your manners? You need to thank these nice people.

Zuko turns around.

ZUKO
Thank you.

Zuko bows his head before turning back around and walking away.

SONG
I know you don’t think there’s any hope left in the world. But there is hope -- the Avatar has returned!

Zuko stops.

ZUKO
I know.

He continues walking. Uncle bows goodbye and they close the door. Zuko notices an ostrich-horse tethered to a nearby post, and begins untying it.

UNCLE
(whispering)
What are you doing? These people just showed you great kindness.

ZUKO
They’re about to show us a little more kindness.

Zuko climbs aboard. Uncle hesitates.

ZUKO (cont’d)
Well?

Uncle reluctantly climbs aboard, and they head off into the night. We see that Song has been watching them, peering out the window, between the curtains. She closes the curtain.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Katara, Aang and Appa walk through the cave tunnel. The torch burns weakly, barely flickering.

AANG
We're going to run out of light any second now, aren't we?

KATARA
I think so.

AANG
Then what are we going to do?

KATARA
What can we do?

There is a long beat. Aang looks into Katara's eyes in the waning fire light.

They both lean towards each other just as the torch GOES OUT. (NOTE: We do not actually see them kiss - or even get close enough to be certain whether or not they kissed. Though it should be implied that they might have.) It becomes pitch black. A beat later, a path on the ceiling, made of crystals, begins to GLOW.

INT. CAVE - ANOTHER AREA - NIGHT

Sokka holds a torch as the nomads walk down a tunnel -- suddenly they hear a HOWL and stop in their tracks. They all stare down the tunnel when, out of the blackness, appears a pack of wolfbats. They snarl, exposing their white fangs that glisten in the light.

The wolf-bats swarm past Sokka and the nomads. Sokka swats wildly at the bats as they fly by. As quickly as they came, the wolf-bats leave. The nomads lift themselves off the ground.

CHONG
You saved us, Sokka!

SOKKA
No, they were trying to get away from something.

CHONG
From what?

Just then, giant BADGER-MOLES appear, Earthbending out from the side of the cave! The badger-moles stomp on the ground causing various Earthbending moves, tripping up and blocking the nomads -- even shooting rocks at them.

A particularly ferocious badger-mole is heading towards Sokka, Earthbending rocks at him. Sokka manages to dodge the rocks but is eventually tripped up -- he lands on his butt looking at the oncoming badger-mole. The badger-mole rears up on its hind legs to attack Sokka. Sokka scoots back, preparing for the blow, when his hand accidentally PLUCKS one of the nomads instruments. The badger-mole suddenly stops his attack. Sokka looks down at the instrument and PLUCKS it a few more times. All the other badger-moles stop attacking and begin heading toward Sokka in a much friendlier manner.

CHONG (cont'd)
Hey, those things are music lovers!

The huge beasts crowd around Sokka as he nervously plucks away at the instrument and sings nervously.

SOKKA
Badger-moles/ Coming toward me/
Come on guys/ Help me out.

The nomads grab their instruments and start playing a song.

CHONG
(singing)
The big bad badger-moles/ who
Earthbend the tunnels/ hate the
wolf bats/ but love the sounds...

INT. STONE DOOR - NIGHT

Katara and Aang look up at the glowing path on the ceiling.

AANG
It's made of some kind of crystals.
They must only light up in the
dark.

KATARA
(recalling)
That's how the two lovers found
each other -- they just put out
their lights and followed the
crystals.

Katara points to a fork in the cave, the crystals only run down one path.

KATARA (cont'd)
(excited)
That must be the way out!

Katara hugs Aang. Then, realizing (about the earlier possible kiss) they slowly stop hugging. They awkwardly look at each other for a beat.

AANG
So... um...

KATARA
Let's go!

She takes off down the path and Aang and Appa follow.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF MOUNTAIN - EARLY MORNING

Katara, Aang and Appa exit from the cave. Appa rears up on his hind legs and stretches out all his arms then flops onto his back, bellowing happily.

AANG
What about Sokka?

Katara looks around. Just then, there is a RUMBLING sound and Sokka appears on the back of a badger mole, Earthbending out of the mountain. The nomads are right behind him.

KATARA
Sokka!

They all jump off the badger-moles. At the sight of the sun, the badger-moles scurry back into the cave.

SOKKA
How did you guys get out?

AANG
Just like the legend says, we let love lead the way.

SOKKA
Really? We let huge ferocious beasts lead our way.

Aang walks off to say hie good-byes to Moku.

KATARA
Why's your forehead all red?

We see that indeed, Sokka's forehead is red.

CHONG
Nobody react to what I'm about to tell you... I think that kid might be the Avatar!

Sokka slaps his forehead.

AANG
So, are you guys going to come to Omashu with us?

MOKU
(simply)
Nope.

AANG
Okay. Thanks for everything, Moku.

CHONG
Sokka, I hope you learned a little something about not letting the plans get in the way of the journey.

SOKKA
Just play your songs.

CHONG
Hey, good plan.
(singing)
Even if you're lost you can't lose the love because it's in heart...

Chong hugs Sokka. Sokka looks miserable.

EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER

The kids appear over a hill to get their first look at Omashu in the distance.

SOKKA
The journey was long and annoying, but now you get to see what it's <u>really</u> about: the destination. I present to you, the Earth Kingdom city of O... oh no.

Sokka looks through his telescope at the great city. He sees a giant Fire Nation flag draped over the main wall and metal bridges spanning the gorge around the city. The kids are shocked to see that Omashu has been taken by the Fire Nation.

END OF SHOW